

## VISION IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

MEETING, January 15, 2009

### MINUTES

Present: Kirk Hazlett, Jennifer Page, Al Rubin, Paul Solomon

Guests: Tim Bowman, Jack Dennis, Jan Kruse, John McAlpin, Jonathan Mascia, Susan Titus

Chairman Hazlett opened the meeting at 7:00pm in the Flett Room of the Library.

#### REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF SUSTAINABLE BELMONT'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

Jan Kruse, chair of Sustainable Belmont (SB), and Jack Dennis, John McAlpin and Jennifer Page, the CAP's editorial committee, discussed the CAP.

Jan noted that work on the CAP began approximately 3 years ago, one of the first of SB's goals, and that the Board of Selectmen gave unanimous approval for the development of a CAP for Belmont. There are 12-15 people working on this initiative. The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate global warming. It was noted that this will also result in financial savings.

There was discussion about the specific goal of reducing emissions by 80% by the year 2050. The original baseline year for this reduction was 2001, but there was insufficient data from that year, so that the baseline will now be 2005-2007.

The CAP will consist of more than 100 pages, divided into 3 parts: an introduction, a greenhouse gas inventory for Belmont, and recommendations for specific actions to achieve the reductions.

The greenhouse gas inventory was done by sector (residential, business and institutions, municipal), and by source (transportation, natural gas and fuel oil, electricity, waste). Software supplied by ICLEI (an international organization promoting local initiatives to preserve the environment) was very helpful in gathering data. In some areas, results were extrapolated from data gathered from a percentage of the total "producers". In others (businesses, town employees), the data was based on surveys. It was noted that 80% of emissions is generated by the residential sector.

A suggestion was made that instead of asking citizens to buy RECS (renewable energy certificates) the Light Department should use the income to support efforts to reduce Belmont's greenhouse gas emissions, e.g. a solar array on a town building. Local efforts might motivate an increase in such funding from town residents. Or, perhaps Belmont should use the income to join the state's Renewable Energy Trust (RET), even though we are not now members because we have our own Municipal Light Department.

Other points made:

- The benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions include improved health, monetary savings, reduction of global warming, and enhancement of national security by reducing our dependence on foreign energy sources.
  - Town government has a critical role in this process, by supplying leadership, setting an example, and by changing policy.
  - The town needs an energy manager. Perhaps the position and cost could be shared with other communities. Or, interns from local universities could perform this function. The manager could also be a resource for residents, and could pursue grants, to help pay for the position.
  - The process going forward: the executive summary is on SB's website ([www.sustainablebelmont.net](http://www.sustainablebelmont.net)), which will be fully activated in 10 days. The full draft of the CAP will be completed in a month. Planning for public "vetting" of the CAP will occur during the month. The vetting will include many meetings with the public, with town meeting members by precinct, with town committees, articles in the local newspaper, letters to the editor, presentations to science classes in the schools. Vision Committee members can be very helpful by attending as many of these meetings as possible, and/or by hosting small meetings in their homes. Also, they can contact Town and Light Department leaders, emphasizing the importance of the CAP. Finally, the Board of Selectmen will be asked to approve the CAP, and it is hoped that Town Meeting will approve a resolution in the fall.
- Jan Kruse felt that the rollout of the CAP would create excitement, knowledge, and bring the community together. She noted SB's e-mail address: [sustainablebelmont@gmail.com](mailto:sustainablebelmont@gmail.com).

## MINUTES

Minutes of the 11/24/08, 12/10/08, and 1/6/09 were approved unanimously.

## TOWN WEBSITE

Sara and Jennifer have compiled the comments from Vision Committee members and at our next meeting will present a proposal for adding information for newcomers to the Town's website .

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Solomon

Secretary Pro Tem